

REMARKS

Claims 2, 4, 21-24 and 28-30 are pending in the present application.

Claims 23 and 29 are currently amended.

Request for Interview

The Applicant respectfully requests a telephonic interview with the Examiner after the Examiner has had an opportunity to consider this Amendment, but before the issuance of the next Office Action. The Applicant may be reached at 617-951-3074.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102

In paragraph 1 of the Office Action dated November 29, 2006, the Examiner rejected claims 2, 4, 21-24 and 28-30 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,285,916 to Kadaba et al. (hereinafter “Kadaba”).

Claim 2, representative in part of all of the rejected claims recites:

2. A mail piece tracking system including:
 - A. one or more servers that perform the operations of
 - i. linking mail piece delivery status information with respective user identifiers,
 - ii. **linking to the delivery status information an attachment consisting of one or more messages from the senders of the mail pieces,**
 - iii. producing listings of the delivery status information for the mail pieces directed to respective users that are associated with the user identifiers, and
 - iv. including links to the respective associated messages in the listings of the delivery status information; and
 - B. one or more browsers or client executables through which the respective users associated with the user identifiers access the delivery status information and the links to the associated messages.

Applicant respectfully submits that the “**one or more messages from the sender**” as particularly claimed is not the contents of the mail piece itself. Nor do the “**one or**

more messages from the sender" consist of the status information. Rather, each of the claims as amended claims linking to the status information some form of attachment, i.e. message, image and so forth or some other supplemental information relating, e.g., to a sender transaction. In claims 2 and 28, this attachment is "one or more messages from the sender." In claims 4 and 30, this attachment is "information relating to the contents of the respective mail pieces." In claim 21, this attachment is "information concerning the contents of the respective mail pieces." In claim 22, this attachment is "images of at least a portion of the contents of the respective mail pieces." In claims 23-24 as currently amended, this attachment is "images of information associated with respective mail pieces." In claim 29 as currently amended, the supplemental information is "sender transaction information"

Page 3, lines 16-24 of the specification describes the additional information as follows:

The table may link related information, such as catalog sale information, magazine subscription offers, bill payment options and so forth to the table entry for a given mail piece. Further, the system may link to the entry more detailed information about the particular mail piece, such as a description or digital image of the contents. The user may then "click" on the links to, for example, view and pay a bill electronically. Also, the system may link to the table entries various attachments, such as related messages from the sender, the delivery company and/or the postal service. A company or an individual sending or delivering the mail piece may thus inform the intended recipient that, for example, a signature or payment is required at time of delivery.

Kadaba discloses a package tracking system that is employed only after a parcel is delivered by a parcel delivery company to an organization's mailroom for the purpose of tracking the package internally within the organization. See col. 2, lines 21-25. The package tracking system disclosed by Kadaba includes a data entry and processing device that is configured to associate and store data related to a particular parcel, including symbol information, signature information and keyed information. See col. 2, lines 34 – 44.

Applicant respectfully submits that the association of such information including keyed information and signatures with a parcel does not teach or suggest linking an attachment including additional information about the contents as claimed because

No portions of Kadaba are cited by the Examiner which would anticipate the claimed steps of linking with the delivery status information, an attachment consisting of any type of additional information.

The Examiner erroneously indicated that “as to Applicant’s ‘information relating to contents’ and ‘image of contents,’ these differences are only found in non-function descriptive material and not functionally involved in the steps recited. The steps would be performed regardless of the information or images presented.” Applicant respectfully submits that, contrary to the Examiner’s characterization, the claimed steps of “associating” are indeed functional and would not be performed by any portion of the system disclosed by Kadaba. For example, the devices disclosed by Kadaba that are configured to associate tracking data with a package, do not have any interface for receiving images or any means for a message from the sender with a package and therefore could not associate an image with a package.

Although Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner with respect to whether the claimed “associating” steps are non-functional, each of the claims are amended herein to use language that is more clearly functional such as **“linking to the delivery status information an attachment consisting of”** certain information relating to the contents of a package.

Applicant respectfully submits that, contrary to the Examiner's characterization, Kadaba does not teach or suggest **linking to the delivery status information an attachment consisting of additional information relating to the contents of the package**. Since Kadaba does not teach or suggest each and every element of any of the rejected claims, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) should be withdrawn.

The claims, as amended, should now be in form for allowance. We respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the rejections of the claims, as amended, and issue a Notice of Allowance for the claims of the elected species and also for the claims of the non-elected species of Group I in light of the allowance of the claims that are determined to be generic claims.

Please charge any fee occasioned by this paper to our Deposit Account No.03-1237.

Respectfully submitted,

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